

# 'Cowboy' rides high in the saddle

By Joe Bustillos  
Daily Titan

Unwavering realism and drugs are two things not normally found together in the movies. "Drugstore Cowboy" successfully mixes these elements.

From ridiculous anti-drug classics such as "Reefer Madness" to the mildly romanticizing "Breakfast Club," the film industry often has been more reactionary than realistic when it comes to depicting drug abuse.

Given America's present paranoia about drugs, one would not expect a film to go beyond the reactionary impulses and intelligently chronicle the lives of four young addicts. "Drugstore Cowboy" is a welcome surprise.

Set in the Pacific Northwest in 1971, the film faithfully echoes the pre-AIDS/pre-Columbian drug cartel innocence of the era. In such an environment, it makes perfect sense to Bob Hughes (Matt Dillon) that the best place for an addict to get his drugs is from a drugstore. So Hughes' wife, Dianne (Kelly Lynch), and another young couple stage elaborate distractions so that Hughes can steal the narcotics from



William Burroughs and Matt Dillon as two drug addicts.

the pharmacy's shelves.

Hughes and his crew are not deranged homicidal monsters or gallant American role-models. They are basic, flawed adults who are unwilling to grow up and have chosen to deal with reality by shooting up. It is their occupation (more like a career) to find that next fix.

"With America facing a plague of drugs, we felt that this was a subject that we had to bring to the screen despite the obvious risks," said executive producer Cary Brokaw. "We thought that previous films about drugs, conven-

ture. I don't make him a hardened guy."

Balancing Hughes' drug-induced mysticism is the animal hunger of his wife played by Lynch. Dillon and Lynch work well together as tragic lovers and Lynch is not afraid to let her character appear awkward and shallow.

"Dianne is not hip," Lynch said. "She is very suburban, a normal girl, not glamorous. She listens to Bobby Gentry and reads 'Love Story.' She could be out bowling instead of pulling drug heists."

Dillon said: "These characters are drug addicts, but in a way they function like an average couple, but with their own set of rules. In a

certain way, they are almost like 'The Honeymooners.' "

James Le Gros as Hughes' slightly dimwitted accomplice, Rick, is the perfect Ed Norton to Hughes' Ralph Kramden. Rick's deadpanned counter-questions to Hughes non-sequitur queries show how these unusual characters treat their unusual circumstances like it is all very normal. "While we're on the subject of hexes maybe you should tell us what other things we shouldn't talk about," Rick says.

"Drugstore Cowboy" reminds us that behind the drug statistics are certain average human beings who are paying for their flaws with their lives.

tional anti-drug films, if you will, were too simplistic and one-dimensional and failed to fully explore the power and desperation of this world." Dillon, who has made a career of playing tough young thugs, instead portrays Hughes with a sense of ironic humor, fear of the inevitable and zealous respect for the unwritten laws of the street.

"What really appealed to me about Bob (Hughes) was the redemption, that Bob can eventually redeem himself," Dillon said. "He lies, he cheats, he steals, he's a drug addict, but I try to keep him kind of



① There was very little drug depiction in "Breakfast Club." ② C-O-L-O-M-B-I-A

Joe Bustillos

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54 lines

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**CLEIN FELDMAN WHITE INC.**

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West Hollywood, CA 90069  
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Telex 703037 CPLUSF LSA  
Telefax (213) 659-3995

September 12, 1989

Dear Colleague:

In **"Drugstore Cowboy,"** a powerful story of crime and redemption, director Gus Van Sant (awarded the 1987 Los Angeles Film Critics Award for **"Mala Noche"**) reveals with dark humor and realism the destructive forces of narcotics and the human strength that allows some addicts to beat the odds.

**"Drugstore Cowboy"** stars Matt Dillon and Kelly Lynch, whose intense performances expose the poignant humanity of two characters from the underside of American life. Dillon stars as Bob Hughes, a wildly impulsive yet charismatic addict who leads a group of outlaws in pharmacy heists across the Pacific Northwest in the early 1970s. Lynch is impressive in her most complex role to date as Hughes' wife, a woman whose attraction to drugs and the thrill of the outlaw life is even stronger than her devotion to Hughes. James Remar, James Le Gros, Heather Graham and novelist William Burroughs also star.

**"Drugstore Cowboy"** was written by Gus Van Sant and Daniel Yost, based on an unpublished novel by James Fogle, a Walla Walla prison inmate currently serving a 22-year sentence for drugstore robberies. The film was produced by Nick Wechsler, who recently executive produced **"sex, lies, and videotape,"** and Karen Murphy, who produced David Byrne's **"True Stories"** and Rob Reiner's **"This is Spinal Tap."** The executive producer was Cary Brokaw.

**"Drugstore Cowboy"** will begin its exclusive engagement at the Nuart Theatre in Los Angeles on October 11th.

On behalf of Avenue Pictures, we cordially invite you and a guest to attend one of the following advance screenings of **"Drugstore Cowboy"**:

Thursday, September 21, 8:00 p.m. -- Pathe Screening Room,  
640 San Vicente Blvd.

X Wednesday, September 27, 8:00 p.m. -- Raleigh Studios, Chaplin Theatre,  
650 N. Bronson

R.S.V.P. Clein Feldman White, (213) 659-1111. Due to limited space, this invitation is not transferable.

Best regards,

  
Mark Pogachefsky

Running time: 100 minutes

MPAA Rating: R

33 West 54th Street  
New York, NY 10019  
Telephone (212) 247-4100  
Telefax (212) 247-4562





MATT DILLON • KELLY LYNCH

# DRUGSTORE COWBOY

AVENUE PICTURES Presents MATT DILLON in "DRUGSTORE COWBOY" KELLY LYNCH JAMES REMAR JAMES LE GROS HEATHER GRAHAM  
and WILLIAM BURROUGHS Music by ELLIOTT GOLDENTHAL Production Designer DAVID BRISBIN Director of Photography ROBERT YEOMAN  
Executive Producer CARY BROKAW Produced by NICK WECHSLER and KAREN MURPHY Written by GUS VAN SANT & DAN YOST Directed by GUS VAN SANT

RECORDED IN  
ULTRA-STEREO

**R** RESTRICTED  
UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING  
PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN

AVENUE  
PICTURES



Avenue Pictures  
invites you and a guest  
to a special screening of  
**“DRUGSTORE COWBOY”**

Wednesday, October 4

7:00 p.m. & 9:00 p.m.

AMC Century 14

10250 Santa Monica Blvd.

R.S.V.P. Clein Feldman White

(213) 659-1111

**“Drugstore Cowboy” opens**

**Wednesday, October 11 in Los Angeles**

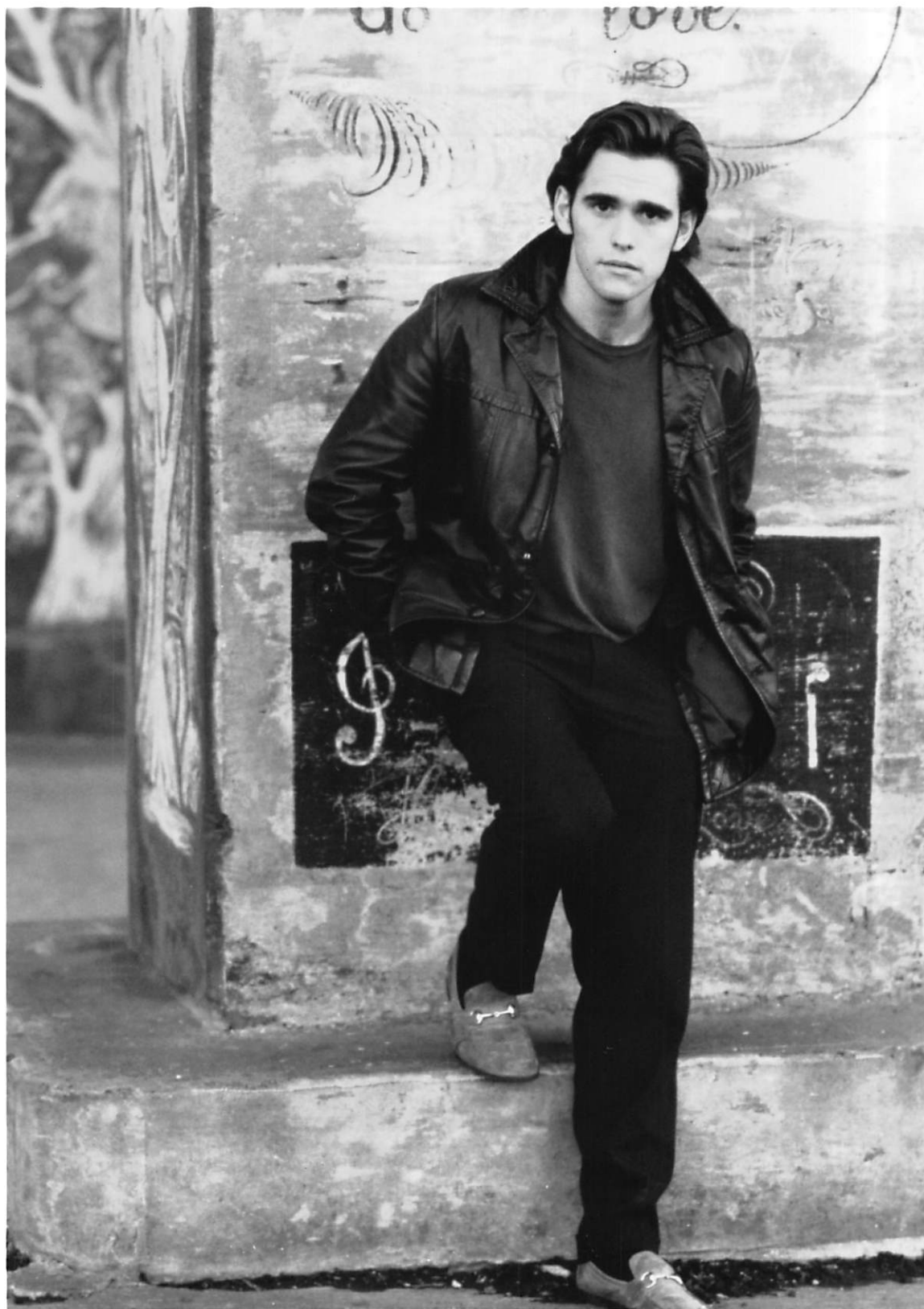


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## "DRUGSTORE COWBOY"

6. MATT DILLON and KELLY LYNCH star as an outlaw American couple whose devotion to each other is matched by their addiction to drugs in Avenue Pictures' "Drugstore Cowboy," a powerful story of a drug addict's life of crime and redemption.





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## "DRUGSTORE COWBOY"

5. MATT DILLON stars as Bob Hughes, the impulsive and moody thief whose life of crime and redemption forms the story of Avenue Pictures' "Drugstore Cowboy."

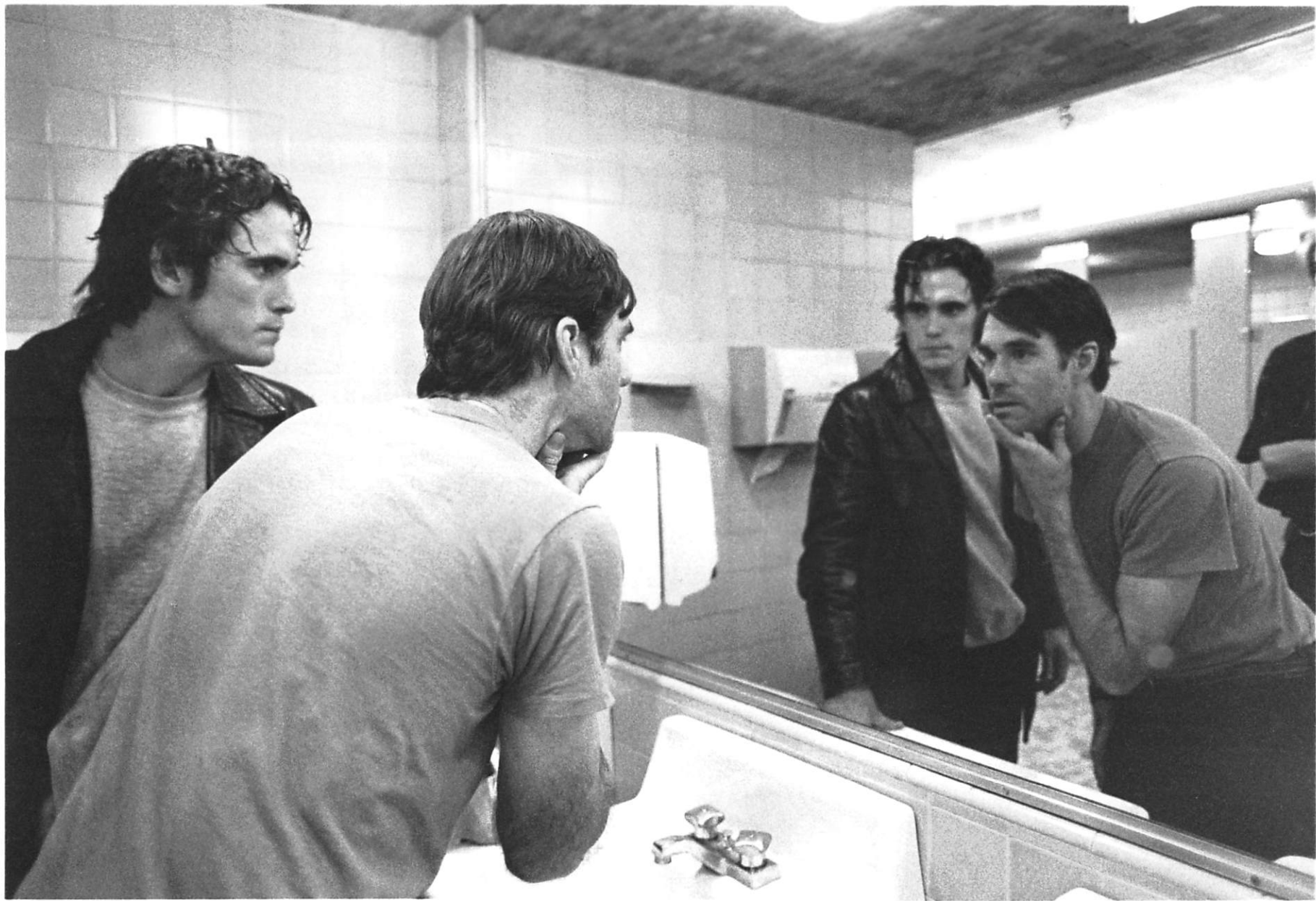


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## "DRUGSTORE COWBOY"

4. KELLY LYNCH stars as Dianne, the drug-addicted wife of a career criminal who can't turn her back on the outlaw life, in Avenue Pictures' "Drugstore Cowboy," a powerful story of crime and redemption.

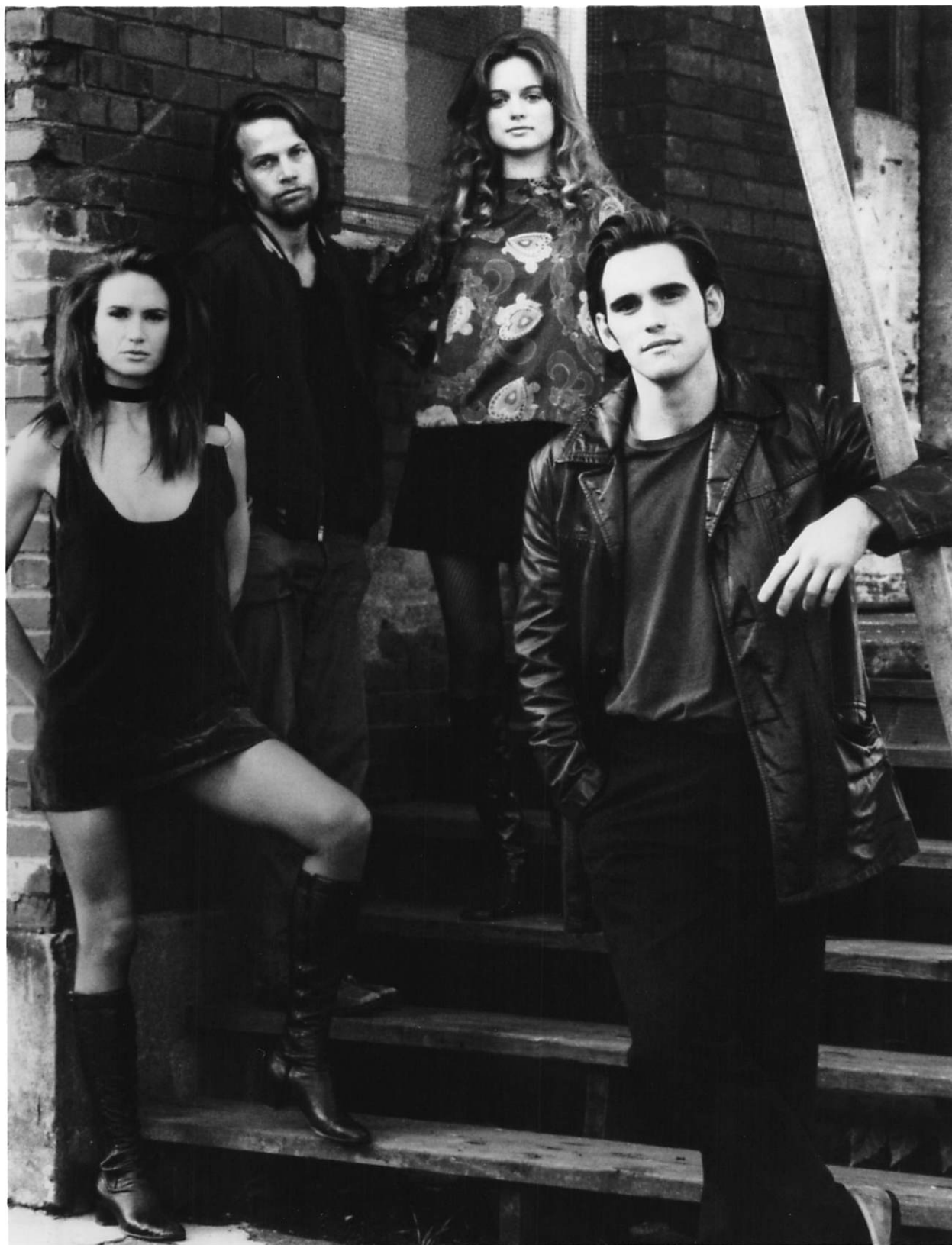




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## "DRUGSTORE COWBOY"

3. Director GUS VAN SANT gives guidance to MATT DILLON on the set of Avenue Pictures' "Drugstore Cowboy," the powerful story of a drug-addict's life of crime and redemption.



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## "DRUGSTORE COWBOY"

1. MATT DILLON, HEATHER GRAHAM, JAMES LE GROS and KELLY LYNCH (R to L) are a group of young outlaws who rob pharmacies for drugs in Avenue Pictures' "Drugstore Cowboy," a powerful story of crime and redemption.



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## "DRUGSTORE COWBOY"

2. In Avenue Pictures' "Drugstore Cowboy," a powerful story of crime and redemption, WILLIAM BURROUGHS plays the defrocked drug-addicted priest who almost succeeds in drawing Bob Hughes, played by MATT DILLON, back into the dark world of drugs.





Date:

Time:

Stage:

10/5

Boy

TERRY

screening

raleigh studios  
Hollywood

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West Hollywood, CA 90069  
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Telefax (213) 659-3995

**AVENUE PICTURES**

Presents

**MATT DILLON**

In

**" DRUG STORE COWBOY "**

**KELLY LYNCH**

**JAMES REMAR**

**JAMES LE GROS**

**HEATHER GRAHAM**

**BEAH RICHARDS**  
**GRACE ZABRISKIE**

**MAX PERLICH**

And

**WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS** as Tom the Priest

Casting by **RICHARD PAGANO, C.S.A. & SHARON BIALY, C.S.A.**

Music by **ELLIOT GOLDENTHAL**

Costume Designer **BEATRIX ARUNA PASZTOR**

Production Designer **DAVID BRISBIN**

Editor **CURTISS CLAYTON**

Director of Photography **ROBERT YEOMAN**

Based on the novel by **JAMES FOGLE**

Screenplay by **GUS VAN SANT & DANIEL YOST**

Executive Producer **CARY BROKAW**

Produced by **NICK WECHSLER & KAREN MURPHY**

Directed by **GUS VAN SANT, Jr.**

MPAA Rating: R

Running Time: 100 min.

071789

33 West 54th Street  
New York, NY 10019  
Telephone (212) 247-4100  
Telefax (212) 247-4562



## Filmmakers

Director.....	Gus Van Sant, Jr.
Producers.....	Nick Wechsler Karen Murphy
Executive Producer.....	Cary Brokaw
Screenplay by.....	Gus Van Sant Daniel Yost
Based on the novel by.....	James Fogle
Director of Photography.....	Robert Yeoman
Editor.....	Curtiss Clayton
Production Designer.....	David Brisbin
Costume Designer.....	Beatrix Aruna Pasztor
Music by.....	Elliot Goldenthal
Casting.....	Richard Pagano, C.S.A. & Sharon Bialy, C.S.A.
Production Manager.....	Karen Koch
First Assistant Director.....	David B. Householter
Second Assistant Director.....	Robin Leigh Fleck
Editor.....	Mary Bauer
Special Acknowledgement.....	Michael Eliasberg
Production Executives.....	Laurie Parker Claudia Lewis
Production Coordinator.....	Eric McLeod
Location Manager.....	Charles Harrington
Production Accountant.....	Jo Barnett
Assistant to the Producers.....	Chloe King
Assistant to Mr. Brokaw.....	Kendra King
Art Director.....	Eve Cauley
Set Decorator.....	Margaret Goldsmith
Lead Man.....	Ken Hardy
Set Dresser.....	Missy Stewart
Art Dept. Assistant.....	Rob Gomez
Swing Gang.....	Benjamin Hayden Linda Dixon
Property Master.....	Michael Gastaldo
Assistant Property Master.....	William Small
Wardrobe Supervisor.....	Marsha Perloff
Wardrobe Assistants.....	Marychris Mass Dana Delfs
Assistant Costume Designer.....	Lynn Murdock
Make-up Artist.....	Lizbeth Williamson
Hair Designer.....	Gina Monaci
Make-up/Hair Assistant.....	Jeanine Greville-Morris
First Assistant Camera.....	John Boccaccio
Second Assistant Camera.....	Randall S. Timmerman
Second unit Photography.....	Eric Alan Edwards
Gaffer.....	Christopher Morley
Best Boy Electric.....	Jesse Mather

## Cast

Bob.....Matt Dillon  
Dianne.....Kelly Lynch  
Rick.....James Le Gros  
Nadine.....Heather Graham  
Druggist.....Eric Hull  
David.....Max Perlich  
Gentry.....James Remar  
Cop.....John Kelly  
Bob's mother.....Grace Zabriskie  
Trousinski.....George Catalano  
Neighbor lady.....Janet Baumhover  
Neighbor man.....Ted D'Arms  
Halamer.....Neal Thomas  
Motel Manager.....Stephen Rutledge  
Drug Counselor.....Beah Richards  
Tom the Priest.....William S. Burroughs  
Hotel Clerk.....Robert Lee Pitchlynn  
Machinist.....Roger Hancock  
Crying Boy.....Mike Parker  
Accomplice.....Ray Monge

and  
Woody as Panda

Electricians.....	Wes Houle
	Michael Gall
Additional Electricians.....	M.E. Menlow
	Steven Welp
	Mary McGowan-Welp
	John F. Gurney
Key Grip.....	Les Percy
Best Boy Grip.....	Willie Mann
Dolly Grip.....	Mike Moad
Grips.....	Mr. Bob Leitelt
	Gary Yahn
Sound Mixer.....	Ron Judkins, C.A.S.
Boom Operator.....	Robert Jackson
Additional boom operator.....	Carl Vandervoort
Script Supervisor.....	Jane Goldsmith
Unit Photographer.....	Demmie Todd
Unit Publicist.....	Kathy Clark
Post Production Supervisor.....	Leslie Leitner
First Assistant Editor.....	Curtis Croeni
Second Assistant Editor.....	Dirk-Jan "D.J." Haanraads
Apprentice Editor.....	Elizabeth Fulton
Post Production Coordinators.....	Maureen Iser
	Lisa Rosen
Additional Editing.....	Caroline Ross
Music Editor.....	Bill Bernstein
Supervising Sound Editor.....	Dane A. Davis, DANETRACKS
Sound Effects Editor.....	John Kwiatkowski
Foley Editors.....	Tom Hammond
	Mark Larry
ADR Editor.....	G.W. Brown
Dialogue Editors.....	Kimberly Voigt
	Randy Vandegrift
Assistant Sound Editors.....	Tracy Toon
	Martha Atwell
Foley Artists.....	Jerry Trent
	Joan Rowe
A.D.R./Foley Mixer.....	Gary Gegan
Voice Casting.....	Barbara Harris
Music Consultant.....	Kosmo Vinyl
Music Coordination.....	Evan M. Greenspan, Inc.
Music Coordinator.....	Randal Case
Assistant Locations.....	Matt Rask
Assistant Accountant.....	Gwen Everman
Additional Accounting.....	Judy Geletko
Head Scenic Artist.....	Dan Self
Painter.....	Christopher Kliks
Paint/Construction Assistant.....	Chris Mikolavich
Head Carpenter.....	Jason Winters
Carpenters.....	Christopher J. Nance
	Charles T. Riggs
	Dana A. Payne
	Don Robinson Lundell
Construction Assistant.....	Gregory Yock
Construction Consultants.....	Studio Concepts
Transportation Coordinator.....	William "Fleet" Eakland



Transportation Captain.....	Bruce Simballa
Drivers.....	Paul Thomas
	Pat Stubbs
	Larry Gersten
	Larry Smith
	Lawrence Ogden
	Harry Alston
	John Hannah
	Pedro Amaya
	John Jan Slovinec
	Robert Eckholt
	Scott Hubacek
Camera car driver.....	Randy Small
Stunt Coordinator.....	David Boushey
Stunt Players.....	Steven D. Buckley
	Robert MacDougall
	Kathleen Reilly
	Paul Thomas
Assistant Coordinators.....	Miriam Garcia
	Christina Ajalat
Set Production Assistants.....	Mark Saltveit
	Erick H. Schultz
Office Production Assistants.....	Drew Silverman
	Susan O'Leary
	Eric Anderson
Craft Service.....	Linda Bloom-Hedine
	Linda Feldmann
First Aid.....	Michelle Croft
Editorial Interns.....	Randal Holmes
	Sharon Ballin
	Charles Abbott
Post Production Intern.....	Tom Walton
Production Interns.....	Kim Lorati
	Alex Rad
Art Department Intern.....	Brian Montague
Paint Intern.....	Steven Elliot
Portland Casting.....	Patti Kalles, C.S.A.
L.A. Casting Assistant.....	Julia Flores
Extras Coordinator.....	Michael Kerras
Stand Ins.....	Kelly Leistritz
	Tito Matos
	Shannon Putnam
Post Production & Re-recording facilites.....	JDH Sound
Re-recording Mixers.....	Wayne Heitman, C.A.S.
	Matthew Iadarola, C.A.S.
Recordist.....	Mark (Frito) Long
Ultra*Stereo Consultant.....	John Lawson
Music Score Recorded & Mixed.....	E = The Enterprise Recording Studio
Recording Engineer.....	Joel Iwataki
Associate Music Production.....	Richard Martinez
Location Equipment.....	Film Trucks, Inc.

Lenses & Panaflex Camera by.....	PANAVISION (R)
Supplied by.....	General Camera West
Camera car provided by.....	The SHOTMAKER
Opticals.....	Cinema Research Corp.
End Titles.....	Mercer Titles & Opticals Effects Ltd.
Public Relations.....	Clein Feldman White, Inc.
Insurance provided by.....	Albert G. Ruben & Co., Inc.
Catering.....	The International Catering Co.
Film processing.....	Alpha Cine Lab, Seattle Deluxe Laboratories, Inc.
Optical Sound Transfer.....	Tom McCormick
Negative Cutting.....	Gary Burritt
Negative Timing.....	Mike Milliken
Release Prints.....	Colorfilm
Completion Bond provided by.....	Film Finances, Inc.
Legal Services.....	Denton Hall Burgin & Warrens Janis Nelson, Steve Gerse Julie Spielberg

## Songs

**"FOR ALL WE KNOW"**

Written by J. Fred Coots & Sam Lewis  
Vocal Performance by Abbey Lincoln  
Piano accompaniment by Geri Allen  
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and Cromwell Music, Inc.

## "LITTLE THINGS"

Written & Performed by Bobby Goldsboro  
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**"PSYCHOTIC REACTION"**

Written by Ken Ellner, Roy Chaney,  
Craig Atkinson, John Byrne, & John Michalski  
Performed by The Count Five  
Published by Drive-In Music  
Courtesy of Original Sound Record Co., Inc.

**"PUT A LITTLE LOVE IN YOUR HEART"**

Written by Jimmy Holiday, Randy Myers & Jackie DeShannon  
Performed by Jackie DeShannon  
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## TV COMMERCIAL MUSIC

Written & Performed by Will Kaplan

"PIU AMORE ROMATICO PER ANNA"  
Composed & Produced By Jeff Levi  
Published by Laughing Cloud Music

"THE ISRAELITES"  
Written by Desmond Dekker & Leslie Kong  
Performed by Desmond Dekker & The Aces  
Courtesy of Island Records, Inc.

"I AM"  
Music & Lyrics by Roky Erickson  
Produced by Craig Luckin & Karl Derfler  
Performed by Roky Erickson & Jack Johnson  
Courtesy of Restless/Pink Dust Records

"JUDY IN DISGUISE"  
Written by John Fred & Andrew Bernard  
Performed by John Fred and His Playboy Band  
Published by Su-Ma Music  
Courtesy of Janus Records c/o Original Sound Entertainment

"CHERRY LIPS"  
Written by Winfield Scott  
Performed by The Robins  
Published by Neil Music, Inc.  
Courtesy of GNP Crescendo Records

# SPECIAL THANKS

Cary Woods  
John Campbell  
Gary Tieche  
Michael Lally  
James Grauerholz  
Bruce Markoe  
Sam Henry  
Leslie Shatz  
Cathy Main  
Pat Lucas  
Theresa Tamiyasu  
J.D. Perkin  
Jan Hassard-Portland Mayor's Office  
Portland Police Department  
Oregon Film and Video Division  
P.A.C.E. Video  
Red Lion Inn-Portland Center  
Emmanuel Hospital & Health Center  
Coda Clinic  
Bruce Weber



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ULTRA\*STEREO

Filmed entirely on location in beautiful Portland, Oregon

In memory of Rob McMurran

AN AVENUE PICTURES RELEASE

One of the most controversial issues in America today -- drugs -- forms the center of "Drugstore Cowboy," a powerful story of a junkie's life of crime and redemption in the 1970s. Despite today's outcry against the dangers of drugs, the world of the dope addict remains shrouded in mystery. A painstakingly authentic depiction of the life of drug addicts, Gus Van Sant's "Drugstore Cowboy" tells the shattering tale of the destructive force of narcotics and reveals an inspiring example of human resilience, hope and survival against the odds.

Like every successful junkie, Bob Hughes (Matt Dillon) lives precariously by his wits and intuition. A superstitious sixth-sense about when to make his next move, a quasi-religious devotion to a personal brand of street justice and an unsinking obeisance to the hand of fate make him a leader among junkies, if a failure among other men.

For the likable but fallen Hughes, being a junkie is a full-time profession, requiring brainy strategy, hard work and good luck. Hughes leads his rag-tag crew, composed of his wife (Kelly Lynch) and a young drug-addicted couple, in the reckless pursuit of a constant state of sang-froid high. The crew wreaks havoc across the Pacific Northwest robbing pharmacies, rumbling through small towns with comic, if nihilistic, style, like bank robbers of another generation, emptying tills of narcotics instead of cash.

Bob is trapped by his unshakable superstition and the consequences of the path he has chosen -- until the day his luck changes, his confidence wanes and his death appears inevitable. Only then, in an act of pure survival, does he find the courage to leave his life of drugs and crime behind.

"With America facing a plague of drugs, we felt that this was a subject that we had to bring to the screen despite the obvious risks," said Executive Producer Cary Brokaw. "We thought that previous films about drugs, conventional anti-drug films if you will, were too simplistic and one-dimensional, and failed to fully explore the power and desperation of this world."

The Avenue Pictures release features an ensemble supporting cast including James Remar, Beah Richards, and Max Perlich, with novelist William S. Burroughs contributing a memorable cameo role. Cary Brokaw is executive producer of the Avenue Pictures release. Nick Wechsler and Karen Murphy are the producers.

Brokaw gave Los Angeles Critics Award-winning director Gus Van Sant the green light to make a film that portrayed the raw, unromanticized reality of the drug addict, to go inside the vivid subculture of addiction and portray it on its own terms, neither glamorizing it nor imposing outside values on it.

Van Sant, a native of the Pacific Northwest, was attracted to an unpublished novel by James Fogle, a Walla Walla prison inmate, himself convicted for pharmaceutical robberies in the 1970's. Fogle's novel is a nearly anthropological dissection of the myths and cultural patterns of the junkie subculture, as seen from within the dirty haze of its seamy underbelly.

The thrill obsessed, vulnerable outcast Bob is loosely based



on Fogle's own experiences and wry perceptions of the poetic swings, dark comedy and desperado sadness of junkiedom.

In the tradition of the infamous self-styled outlaws before him, Bob Hughes has created his own mythology of the junkie-thieving life, replete with devils and omens and even redemptive forces.

Responding to the dark poetry that runs through his veins, he has given his addiction its own voice -- a sometimes comic, sometimes caustic narrative of life on the edge. And knowing that his death may come at any moment, Bob has taken care to preserve his own legends of lucky heists and horrific betrayals (albeit by a dog, who met its own bitter end).

In his drug-hungry mind, Bob and his wife Dianne are a modern-day Bonnie and Clyde, leading dark but grandly poetic criminal lives, yearning for respect from a world that wishes they would just disappear.

Tracking the ups and downs of a drug addict's perception of the world was a difficult challenge for all involved. Van Sant aimed for an illusion-laden subjectivity, a way of capturing the rosy hue of drug-induced optimism when Bob and his crew were high and contrasting it with the harsh reality of Bob's sobriety.

The result is a film about drugs with a message that emerges from deep within the characters and situations, presenting a unique and vivid journey into the underside of American culture.

"'Drugstore Cowboy' is a vision from a junkie's mind," said Van Sant. "So the design and spirit of the film is a little removed from reality, a junkie fantasy where everything works

out. But there is also the down side, when the junk wears out."

Matt Dillon spent weeks talking with current and ex-junkies to work out the intricacies of a character whose whole point of view would change when he was high, whose world on drugs was a place where nothing could go wrong, and yet the minute the drugs wear off, fear returns with a vengeance.

Dillon also had to come to grips with the contradictions of a character who one minute could laugh hysterically at the mishap of a cop who'd been mistakenly shot, and the next would be genuinely worried about people getting hurt during one of his heists.

"What really appealed to me about Bob was the redemption, that Bob can eventually redeem himself," Dillon said. "He lies, he cheats, he steals, he's a drug addict, but I try to keep him kind of pure. I don't make him a hardened guy. He's not mean."

In addition to his wife Dianne, who loves Bob but loves junk even more, Bob's gang consists of a young apprentice thief named Rick (James Le Gros) who hopes to learn a trick or two from the more experienced Bob; and Rick's girlfriend Nadine (Heather Graham), a naive teenager willing to do anything out of her desperate hunger for acceptance.

Nadine's sudden death by overdose and its incumbent foreboding of his own imminent imprisonment or death slams into Bob with the cold fist of reality. Finally, he makes a decision he's struggled with all his life. He announces, to Dianne's complete dismay, that he is going to abandon drugs and change his life for good -- even though he realizes this decision will cut him off from Dianne, whom he genuinely loves and admires, and

everything their life together has meant.

The decision is the most difficult one of Bob's life. "What attracted me to that character," said Dillon, "is that despite what he has done, despite the life he leads, he still has that strength to make that decision. Playing this, making this real, was one of the hardest things I've had to do as an actor."

While the decision to go straight is difficult, the daily struggle to keep off drugs is even more difficult. But Bob has made up his mind, and perseveres. The greatest temptation is a visit from Dianne, now the girlfriend of his old protege Rick. She appears like a ghost from his past, more beautiful than ever, and bringing a bountiful package of high potency drugs for him. But in a tightly controlled scene full of unspoken hurt and sadness for what will never be, Bob and Dianne part, almost certainly for good.

Temptation also comes to Bob in the form of Father Tom, a defrocked junkie priest, portrayed by novelist William S. Burroughs. Burroughs, whose controversial and acclaimed novel "The Naked Lunch" captured the heart-stopping mixture of manic fantasy and grim reality that makes up the world of the urban junkie, is a long-time hero of director Gus Van Sant.

As Father Tom, Burroughs plays Bob's alter-ego, the arch-angel who first turned him onto drugs and who reaches out to take him back into the drug world even after Bob thinks he has escaped. Bob struggles with the bonds that link them in eternal kinship; both are addicts in their souls, but one is ascending, the other descending.



Bob sees the tired, cynical old man and sees a possible prediction of his future. He is filled with a mixture of revulsion and desire. It is a heady vision that keeps him from straying.

Kelly Lynch was cast as Matt's superficially tough but deeply vulnerable and dependent wife Dianne. "I actually knew someone like her when I was growing up," said Lynch. "I could see that there was always something inside, a hurt that nothing could reach. I was thinking of her when I was putting together my performance as Dianne."

In Lynch's eyes, Dianne is a nice, average suburban girl who has been fatefully hooked into the adrenaline thrill of the junkie's life of crime. "Dianne is not hip," Lynch explained. "She is very suburban, a normal girl, not glamorous. She listens to Bobby Gentry and reads Love Story. She could be out bowling instead of pulling drug heists."

Despite their grim situation, the love between Dianne and Bob is very real and passionate, and Dianne's aggressive pursuit of drugs appears partly motivated by her deep concern for the welfare of Bob and their companionship.

Though their love story is tainted by a life of crime, the everyday workings of their relationship is -- in many respects -- surprisingly similar to that of any American couple.

"These characters are drug addicts," added Dillon, "but, in a way, they function like an average couple, but with their own set of rules. In a certain way, they are almost like 'The Honeymooners.'"

The scary side of Dianne, said Lynch " is that she can't

function outside of that drug life, she's not flexible, she has no options. When Bob says he's going to leave the life and kick, she can't go with him, there's nothing else for her."

Lynch and Dillon grounded their performances as lovers, first bound together and then separated by the needle, in the heartbreak they have personally seen drugs inflict on people close to them.

Lynch and Dillon were further helped in their depictions by William S. Burroughs, whose life as an addict informs the books that have made him famous the world over.

"The film is very timely, and therefore it is likely to attract disapproval from predictable quarters," said Burroughs. "It is, nevertheless, a very good sign," continues the writer, "that a film like this can be made."

Further suggestions were offered by writer Jim Carroll, author of The Basketball Diaries. "Jim related some of his own experiences as an addict," said Van Sant, "relating them to the mania of the characters in the story. He had gone through the same mania, the plotting and intricate planning, the thinking of things throughout the night that never wind up being done, the fantasies and projects that our characters are involved with."

The insight into the "mania," as Van Sant calls it, was particularly important because it grounded and gave voice to the point of view of the film.

Production designer David Brisbin worked closely with Van Sant in creating a coherently stylized world for Bob and his 1971 gang of pharmacy robbers -- in color.

Particularly influential in designing the way the film -- and the characters -- would look was the book "Tulsa," a collection of black and white pictures taken by photographer Larry Clark of young drug addicts and petty criminals in that city during the late sixties. Brisbin soon discovered that most of the research material from that period, including photos and documentary film, were in black and white.

To transfer that shadowy mood and grim authenticity to color, Brisbin consciously decided to "narrow his palette, to find a smaller range of color."

The choice was obvious. "Once we were location scouting, looking around Oregon, there was green everywhere," said Brisbin.

After explaining his color scheme and showing the entire production crew a series of pictures with the color ranges he was looking for, Brisbin was soon being shown vintage lime green vehicles by his transportation coordinator, kelly green clothing by his wardrobe mistress, and unusual period furniture in shades ranging from forest to chartreuse.

"It can be a dangerous thing," Brisbin said, "if you fix too much on an idea like that, but it can also be very useful to get a simple explanation that everyone connected with the show can keep in mind."

The path by which an unpublished novel by a prison inmate came to be made into a Hollywood feature was a circuitous one. James Fogle, currently serving a ten year term, began writing in California prisons in the early 70s. He sent his first novel, about life in San Quentin, to Tom Gaddis, a writer (Birdman of Alcatraz) who at the time was working with convicts. Gaddis was

impressed by the writing but was already working with as many convicts as he could. He put Fogle in touch with Daniel Yost, an Oregon magazine writer who had done a feature about Gaddis' prison work.

"It was a mess grammatically," recalls Yost, "but it was an amazing story. I was struck by its originality; this was obviously a person with a unique storytelling ability. I heard a strong, individual voice, creating a whole subculture that most people don't ever see."

Yost began corresponding with Fogle, offering editorial help and encouragement. Yost received Drugstore Cowboy in 1976, and working with the author, cleaned up plot holes, "added character development," and helped shape it into a clear-eyed and unabashedly criminal's-eye view of a world of men and women moving compulsively from crime to crime.

The characters, Fogle says, "are a composite of two or three people; nothing is really completely true, but there are a lot of people in these prisons that follow this pattern of hospital and pharmacy robberies."

Despite the vividness of the action and the characters, some 30 publishers passed on the book, and Fogle returned to prison after another series of pharmacy robberies, including one in Wisconsin in which his accomplice was killed by police.

A copy of his manuscript, however, remained with Yost, who had not given up on it. In 1987 when Yost's friend Gus Van Sant was looking for a film subject, Yost showed him Drugstore Cowboy.

"Fogle has a lot of talent; his characters have a lot of



life to them," says Van Sant. A Portland native since 1983, Van Sant also liked the idea of a film set in the Pacific Northwest, which he could direct on his home ground. At the time Van Sant had just finished his first feature, "Mala Noche," a black-and-white film shot in Portland adapted from an autobiographical story by a Portland skid row street poet.

Made for under \$50,000 as an independent production, "Mala Noche," tells the story of the compulsive love of a skid row liquor store clerk for a young Mexican migrant laborer. The film won the Los Angeles Film Critics Award for Best Independent/Experimental Feature.

Although schooled in gritty realism, Van Sant watched "Drugstore Cowboy" move from the numbing reality of Fogle's original novel to a deeper, more darkly comic story mixing allegory and surrealism with the factualism of the junkie life.

For executive producer Cary Brokaw the contradictions between Bob Hughes' vivid inner life and comically unglamorous reality point out the ultimate message of the film. "'Drugstore Cowboy' reveals the real human suffering and drama that lie deep within the myth-enshrouded life of drugs and crime that most of us, thankfully, will never experience firsthand."

## About the Filmmakers

### Gus Van Sant (Director)

At 36, director Gus Van Sant is well on his way to becoming Portland, Oregon's filmmaker-laureate. "Drugstore Cowboy" is his second feature film set in his home city. The first, "Mala Noche," an extraordinary chronicle of a doomed romance between a Mexican migrant laborer and a clerk in a skid row liquor store, won the Los Angeles Film Critics Award for Best Independent Film of 1987. He has also made numerous short films there, including a seven-minute adaptation of his literary hero William S. Burroughs' short story, "The Discipline of D.E.."

Van Sant was born in Louisville, but moved around the country as a child. After attending Rhode Island School of Design he moved to Hollywood, where he began working with Ken Shapiro, the maker of the cult classic "Groove Tube." Later, he made an independent feature of his own, "Alice in Hollywood."

In 1983, after a two-year period working in advertising in New York, he moved to Portland, where he's lived ever since.

Since 1984 Van Sant has been making an annual three to five minute short about something that is happening in his life ("they are sort of autobiographical, but not exactly.") that he plans to eventually assemble into a film diary.

Van Sant also paints -- "mostly landscapes: I've been working on the same themes for ten years" -- and plays guitar and writes songs for his own Portland band, "Destroy All Blondes."

**Nick Wechsler (Producer)**

"Drugstore Cowboy" producer Nick Wechsler began his career as a lawyer, after attending school at the University of Pennsylvania, USC, and Loyola Law School. He practiced for various firms before moving into entertainment, first as a manager for musicians, including Robbie Robertson.

Wechsler recently executive produced Steven Soderbergh's "sex, lies, and videotape," winner of the coveted Golden Palm at this year's Cannes Film Festival. He has produced a number of films currently awaiting release, including "Made In U.S.A.," directed by Ken Friedman, starring Chris Penn, Adrian Pasner, and Lori Singer and "The Beat" (co-produced with Julia Phillips), directed by Paul Monas.

"Any film that doesn't fall into the genre that the majors would make involves problems," he notes. "I have offbeat sensibilities, and can find homes for directors that veer in that direction."

Next year, he will produce a film version of Jim Carroll's "The Basketball Diaries," to be directed by Monas.

**Karen Murphy (Producer)**

Producer Karen Murphy's most recent film was David Byrne's "True Stories." She has also produced videos for Byrne, Rob Reiner's cult classic comedy rockumentary spoof "This is Spinal Tap" and the comedy video series "Likely Stories." Previous credits include documentaries, including one on "The New Klan" for PBS, and the feature "Save The Last Dance For Me." She was a member of TVTV, the now-legendary pioneering video group.

**Cary Brokaw (Executive Producer)**

The chairman and chief executive officer of Avenue Pictures, "Drugstore Cowboy" executive producer Cary Brokaw has a long track record for making out-of-the-mainstream but successful films.

As president of Island Pictures, Brokaw led the team that acquired or produced and marketed a remarkable list of titles including Alan Rudolph's "Choose Me"; Jonathan Demme's "Stop Making Sense"; Hector Babenco's "Kiss of the Spider Woman"; Spike Lee's "She's Gotta Have It," and Jim Jarmusch's "Down By Law."

It was to make similar films, and bring them to an even broader audience that Brokaw and entertainment lawyer Michael Eliasberg founded Avenue Entertainment on May 1, 1987. Among the films already produced by Avenue are "Pascali's Island," "The Year My Voice Broke," "Tapeheads" and the political thriller "Ground Zero."

Recent releases have included "Signs of Life," a heartwarming story of an extraordinary day in the life of a small Maine fishing community, and the Nuevo Western comedy "Cold Feet."

"Avenue's charter is to create and distribute motion pictures of quality without compromising their potential commercial appeal," says Brokaw. "There is an ever increasing audience for films of substance and ambition. Entertainment does not have to be simplistic; it is more rewarding when it is rich and complex."



**Daniel Yost (Co-screenwriter)**

Daniel Yost grew up in Portland, studied journalism at the University of Portland and went on to become a sportswriter in Portland at the Oregonian and the Oregon Journal.

He left newspaper work, spending one year in a cabin he built in a remote area of inland British Columbia. After what he called "an amazingly cold winter," he moved back to civilization and into freelance writing, completing two novels and a number of screenplays. During this time, he also worked with animator Will Vinton (currently most famous for his California Raisins) on "The Adventures of Mark Twain."

A regular contributor to Northwest Magazine, he was introduced to James Fogle by writer Tom Gaddis while writing a story about Gaddis' work with prison writers for the magazine. Yost worked with Fogle to shape his novel "Drugstore Cowboy" into a screenplay.

Yost's screenplay for "Tunnels" was produced by Film Ventures International in early 1988, starring Catherine Bach and Nicholas Guest. Currently, he has two other screenplays in independent production.

**James Fogle (Novelist)**

Currently an inmate serving a 22-year sentence at the Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla Washington, James Fogle, now 52, has spent most of his life in and out of prisons for crimes similar to the ones portrayed in "Drugstore Cowboy," which is adapted from his novel of the same name.

Fogle has also served time in prisons at McNeil Island

Washington, Salem Oregon, and Soledad and San Quentin prisons in California, for burglaries and robberies, "all drug related."

He has been writing regularly since the early 70s, and "Drugstore Cowboy " was written in 1977. He has also written numerous stories, and another novel, "Satan's Sandbox."

He is near finishing a new science fiction novel called "The House of Worms," about an alternate future in which "drugs are free, but everything that is legal costs money."

When he finishes his term at Walla Walla, he is scheduled to be transferred to a Wisconsin state prison where he will serve additional time for a drugstore robbery in that state in which his partner was killed by police.

When he is eventually released, "I'm going to square up. I'm on a whole different trip now. I can get a good job as a machinist, still, who knows what's around the next corner."

#### **Bob Yeoman (Cinematographer)**

Bob Yeoman's previous credits as cinematographer include two films by William Friedkin: "To Live and Die in L.A.," which he took over halfway into production, and "Rampage."

He also provided cinematography for Robert Downey Sr.'s "Rented Lips,"; "Johnny B. Goode," starring Anthony Michael Hall; and the cop buddy comedy "Dead Heat."

In "Drugstore Cowboy," he says, "I have basically been trying to catch the Portland look in the exteriors. We were lucky that the days we were doing our outdoor shooting the weather has been totally overcast, because we didn't want the

colors to be vivid, we wanted things to be kind of down."

**David Brisbin (Production Designer)**

Production designer David Brisbin, 31, created the deliberately monochromatic look of "Drugstore Cowboy," with its heavy emphasis on greens.

Brisbin originally studied architecture at Rice University, going on to study film at Cal Arts, from which he received an M.A. degree in 1983. He immediately began work as an art director on such films as "Serpent and the Rainbow," "Animal Behavior," "My Love Letters," "Desert Hearts," and "Maria's Lovers." His first job as a production designer was on "Skydivers." He was also production designer on the forthcoming "The Tender," starring John Travolta.

**Beatrix Aruna Pasztor (Costume Designer)**

Beatrix Aruna Pasztor was educated in Hungary, where she studied design at the Academy of Applied Arts in Budapest. Her most recent film was "Bloodhounds of Broadway." Her costume work for "Drugstore Cowboy" was guided by historical photos and also by walking around the streets of Portland, where, she says, "you still see all the 70s styles."

**Elliot Goldenthal (Music)**

Composer Elliot Goldenthal received an Obie Award for his music utilizing instruments from around the world for "Juan Darien," a critically praised primitive passion play co-written by Goldenthal and based on a famous Uruguayan jungle tale.

Goldenthal also wrote the musical "The Transposed Heads," based on a novel by Thomas Mann, which premiered at Lincoln Center. His other theatre works include compositions for Carlo Gozzi's "The King Stag," which toured the U.S. and Europe, and "Liberty's Taken." He also composed scores for three Shakespeare plays produced at Joseph Papp's Public Theatre and the Stratford American Shakespeare Festival.

In 1988 Goldenthal was commissioned by A.S.C.A.P. to compose an orchestral work in celebration of Leonard Bernstein's seventieth birthday. He was also commissioned to compose a new work for the Haydn-Mozart Chamber Orchestra commemorating the 75th anniversary of Ebbets Field. Composer of numerous works for full and chamber orchestra, Goldenthal was the first recipient of the Arturo Toscanini Award for musical composition.

For film, Goldenthal has composed the scores for Mary Lambert's "Pet Semetary" as well as "Blank Generation" and "Cocaine Cowboys" with Andy Warhol. He has also produced scores for H.B.O., I.B.M. and Metromedia.

## About The Cast

### **Matt Dillon** (Bob Hughes)

Matt Dillon, who plays the moody, impulsive thief Bob Hughes in "Drugstore Cowboy," has been starring in films since he was 14, when he went from a chance encounter in a suburban New York junior high school to a lead role in the hotly controversial "Over the Edge." His performance as the leader of a band of kids left alone in an ultramodern "planned community" established him as an icon for a whole generation of American students.

This reputation only grew with his appearance in three early 1980s films taken from the novels of S.E. Hinton: "Tex" (1982) directed by Tim Hunter, and "Rumblefish" (1983) and "The Outsiders," both directed by Francis Ford Coppola.

Dillon also excelled in more romantic, less hard-edged vehicles, including a role as a school bully in Tony Bill's "My Bodyguard," as a summercamp romeo in "Little Darlings" and as a poor boy in love with a rich girl in "Liars Moon." Among his most accomplished performances to date was his assured and complex portrayal of a plumber's son trying to reconcile family loyalty and personal ambition in Garry Marshall's 1984 "The Flamingo Kid."

More recent roles have included his performance as a son who discovers that his father, Gene Hackman, is a spy in Arthur Penn's "Targets" (1985); parts in the WWII romantic drama "Rebel" (1986) and the film version of Richard Wright's classic novel of racial



hate and self-hate "Native Son" (1986); and his portrayal of a high stakes gambler rolling dice in 1950s Chicago in "The Big Town." He played an unstable, manipulative ex-con in David Stevens' "Kansas" (1987) and will also appear in Howard Brookner's forthcoming "Bloodhounds on Broadway."

Dillon has also worked on the stage, notably in the 1985 New York production of "The Boys of Winter."

Dillon researched diligently for the part of Bob Hughes in "Drugstore Cowboy," even visiting the State Penitentiary at Walla Walla Washington to talk to convict James Fogle, author of the original novel.

It was not Dillon's first prison visit, Fogle learned. "He's hell of a smart kid, a hell of a mimic," observed Fogle. "All of a sudden he started talking prison jargon; I looked at him, and suddenly realized that he was mimicking people he had met from a joint he had visited a year ago," when Dillon was researching his part in Kansas. "I know those kind of people; he was good."

Dillon was attracted to a certain spine of decency he saw in his character; "Bob Hughes is messed up," he said, "but he has a certain code that he lives by. In his mind, he works hard for his drugs, and that's his justification."

#### **Kelly Lynch (Dianne Hughes)**

As Dianne Hughes, the drug-addicted wife of an impulsive career criminal, Kelly Lynch contributes a resolutely and stubbornly non-glamorous performance to "Drugstore Cowboy" that may surprise people who have seen her in earlier roles.

As a blonde barfly, first in "Bright Lights, Big City," then in "Cocktail," Lynch has lately been portraying gorgeous but shallow women. A former model, she realized she was fitting into a stereotype.

"I'm not a model turned actress," she said. "I'm actually an actress turned model turned actress."

Her acting career started as a 4-year old in her native La Jolla California, and continued, when as teenager in Minneapolis, she worked at the Guthrie theater as an apprentice.

But there were interruptions. The first came at age 21, when she broke both her thighs in an accident, requiring a lengthy but very successful (she remains a professional caliber dancer) rehabilitation.

Interruption two: as a drama student in New York, she got onto the same elevator as John Casablancas, head of the Elite model agency. In her first year as a model, she made \$250,000. "I am never going to be sorry I was a model," she said. "The things I saw, the places I found myself. It was an amazing experience."

Her profession now is acting, though. Lynch has appeared in television episodes of "Miami Vice," "The Equalizer" and others. In addition to her work in "Bright Lights" and "Cocktail," she has a featured role in "Roadhouse," playing a strait-laced doctor who falls for Patrick Swayze.

More recently, she completed "Warm Summer Rain," an independent film written and directed by Joe Gatton, in which she plays a woman rehabilitating herself after a suicide attempt.

Co-starring with Matt Dillon in "Drugstore," she welcomed the opportunity to do gritty instead of glitzy. "People like me looking blonde and tan; I wanted to see if I could get away from that. What's great about this character is that she really is a slice of life. She's not a corporate lawyer: she's just an uneducated normal person who has happened to find a niche in the world of thievery. Someone like Dianne is the opposite of what you would want to be."

#### **James Le Gros (Rick)**

James Le Gros plays Rick, the young and still impressionable accomplice to a veteran pharmacy burglar in "Drugstore Cowboy."

Le Gros' most recent role was in "Phantasm II," in which he played the lead. Other recent films include "The Pitch," "Fatal Beauty," "Batteries Not Included," "Solar Babies," "Real Men" and Danny DeVito's "The Ratings Game." On television, he has appeared in episodes of "Crime Story," "Private Eye," "Simon and Simon" and several television movies.

"In the film, I'm a TV baby," says Le Gros. "My character represents the coming of a new generation, more violent, raised on television. When you see death every day on television, it's going to have an impact."

#### **Heather Graham (Nadine)**

"Drugstore Cowboy" is set in 1971, when Heather Graham, who plays Nadine, a teen-age runaway whose willfulness brings about catastrophe, was only a year old.

Before working in "Drugstore," Graham starred in the comedy

"License to Drive," the made-for-television "Foreign Exchange," and "Little Miss Perfect," a Schoolbreak special.

In Los Angeles, she has appeared on stage in "The Cave Dwellers," "The Time of Your Life" and "Echoes of Dionysus."

Graham's role as a drug addict and thief is a change from earlier parts as "cheerleaders and the girl next door," she says, or from her actual background as a recent graduate from suburban Agoura, California high school, and the daughter of an FBI agent.

"That makes the part exciting and interesting for me," she says. "It was a chance to do something really different. But I'm glad that the film doesn't show drugs as glamorous, and doesn't make people think that the lifestyle is an exciting thing."

#### **James Remar**

In "Drugstore Cowboy" James Remar, who has played some of the more memorable criminals in recent films, plays a tough cop who nevertheless has a certain amount of grudging respect for the pharmacy burglar he is trying to arrest.

Remar's previous roles have included his interpretation of Dutch Schultz in Frances Ford Coppola's "Cotton Club," and the frightening killer Ganz in Walter Hill's "48 Hours." Remar has also appeared in two other Hill action adventures: "The Warriors" and "The Longriders." His other credits include "Dream Team," "On The Yard," "Clan of the Cave Bear," "13 O'Clock," and "Quiet Cool."

On television, he had a major role in the ABC mini-series

"Mystic Warrior," in addition to appearances on "Hill Street Blues," "Miami Vice" and "The Equalizer." His credits also include numerous stage roles, including the Broadway production of "Bent."